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**Claims**

1. A method of decoding a received spread OFDM wireless communication signal comprising:

- 5 performing an equalizing and decision function on the received spread OFDM signal ( $y$ ),  
 splitting the equalized and decided spread OFDM signal

block ( $\hat{s}$ ) into a number  $2^i$  of portions ( $\hat{s}_1, \hat{s}_2, \hat{s}_3, \hat{s}_4$ ),

such that  $\hat{s} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{s}_1 \\ \hat{s}_2 \\ \hat{s}_3 \\ \hat{s}_4 \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix}$ , where  $i$  is positive integer;

- 10 characterised by:

for each of said portions ( $\hat{s}_i$ ) of the equalized and decided signal block in turn subtracting values  $M$

$(M \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ \hat{s}_2 \\ \hat{s}_3 \\ \hat{s}_4 \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix})$  derived from the other portions ( $\hat{s}_2$  to  $\hat{s}_4 \dots$ ) of

- the equalized and decided signal block from the received  
 15 signal block ( $y$ ) to produce a respective difference  
 signal, where  $M = H \cdot W$ ,  $H$  is an  $N \times N$  diagonal matrix related to  
 the complex frequency channel attenuations and  $W$  is an  $N \times N$  unitary  
 spreading matrix; and  
 performing an equalising and decision function on the  
 20 respective difference signal to produce a further  
 processed equalized and decided portion ( $\hat{\hat{s}}_i$ ) of the  
 received signal in which interference due to the other

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portions ( $\hat{s}_2$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ) of the equalized and decided signal block is substantially reduced;

the steps of producing the respective difference signal and performing the equalising and decision function to

- 5 produce the further processed equalized and decided portion being repeated for each of the other portions ( $\hat{s}_2, \hat{s}_3, \hat{s}_4$ ) of the signal block.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein repeating  
10 subtracting the values derived from other portions of the equalized and decided signal block from the received signal to produce a respective further difference signal comprises subtracting values derived from at least one of said further processed portions ( $\hat{s}_2$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ) of the received  
15 signal from the received spread OFDM signal ( $y$ ).

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2 further comprising iterating processing the signal block, including iterating the steps of producing the respective  
20 difference signal and performing the equalising and decision function to produce the further processed equalized and decided portion with values derived from the further processed portions ( $\hat{s}_1$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ) in place of previously processed portions ( $\hat{s}_1$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ), to recover still  
25 more reliable estimates for each of the portions.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein iterating processing the signal block includes splitting the equalized and decided spread OFDM signal block ( $\hat{s}$ ) into a  
30 number  $2^j$  of portions ( $\hat{s}_1$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ), where  $j$  is a positive

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integer greater than  $i$  so that iterating the steps of producing the respective difference signal and performing the equalising and decision function to produce the further processed portion is performed with a greater  
5 number of portions than the previous steps.

5. A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said equalizing steps comprise multiplying by a first  
diagonal matrix having elements dependent on channel  
10 coefficients; and  
multiplying by a second matrix which is a subset of a Walsh Hadamard matrix.

6. A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein  
15 said equalizing steps comprise performing minimum mean square error equalization.

7. A receiver (160-180) for use in a spread OFDM  
wireless communication system (100), the receiver  
20 comprising  
means for receiving a spread OFDM wireless communication signal, and decoding means for decoding the received signal by a method as claimed in any preceding claim,  
said decoding means comprising:  
25 equalizing and decision means for performing said  
equalizing and decision function on the received spread OFDM signal ( $y$ ),

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means for splitting the equalized and decided spread OFDM signal block ( $\hat{s}$ ) into a number  $2^i$  of portions ( $\hat{s}_1, \hat{s}_2, \hat{s}_3, \hat{s}_4$ ),

such that  $\hat{s} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{s}_1 \\ \hat{s}_2 \\ \hat{s}_3 \\ \hat{s}_4 \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix}$ , where  $i$  is positive integer;

characterised by:

- 5 subtracting means for subtracting, for each of said portions ( $\hat{s}_1$ ) of the equalized and decided signal block in

turn, said values  $M \begin{pmatrix} M \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ \hat{s}_2 \\ \hat{s}_3 \\ \hat{s}_4 \\ \vdots \end{bmatrix} \end{pmatrix}$  derived from the decided

other portions ( $\hat{s}_2$  to  $\hat{s}_4 \dots$ ) of the equalized and decided signal block from the received signal block ( $y$ ) to

- 10 produce a respective difference signal, where  $M = H \cdot W$ ,  $H$  is an  $N \times N$  diagonal matrix related to the complex frequency channel attenuations and  $W$  is an  $N \times N$  unitary spreading matrix;

said equalizing and decision means being arranged to perform said equalising and decision function on the

- 15 respective difference signal to produce said further processed equalized and decided portion ( $\hat{s}_1$ ) of the received signal in which interference due to the other portions ( $\hat{s}_2$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ) of the equalized and decided signal block is substantially reduced;

- 20 and said decoding means being arranged to repeat, for each of the other portions ( $\hat{s}_2, \hat{s}_3, \hat{s}_4$ ) of the signal block, said steps of producing the respective difference signal and performing the equalising and decision

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function to produce the further processed equalized and decided portion.

8. A receiver as claimed in claim 7 wherein said  
5 subtracting means is arranged so that repeating  
subtracting the values derived from the other portions of  
the equalised and decided signal block from the received  
signal to produce a respective further difference signal  
comprises subtracting values derived from at least one of  
10 said further processed portions ( $\hat{s}_2$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ) of the received  
signal from the received spread OFDM signal ( $y$ ).

9. A receiver as claimed in claim 7 or 8 wherein said  
decoding means is arranged to iterate processing the  
15 signal block, including iterating the steps of producing  
the respective difference signal and performing the  
equalising and decision function to produce the further  
processed equalized and decided portion with values  
derived from the further processed portions ( $\hat{s}_1$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ) in  
20 place of previously processed portions ( $\hat{s}_1$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ), to  
recover still more reliable estimates for each of the  
portions.

10. A receiver as claimed in claim 9 wherein said  
25 decoding means is arranged so that iterating processing  
the signal block includes splitting the equalized and  
decided spread OFDM signal block ( $\hat{s}$ ) into a number  $2^j$  of  
portions ( $\hat{s}_1$  to  $\hat{s}_4$ ), where  $j$  is positive integer greater  
than  $i$  so that iterating the steps of producing the  
30 respective difference signal and performing the

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equalising and decision function to produce the further processed portion is performed with a greater number of portions than the previous steps.

- 5 11. A receiver as claimed in any of claims 7 to 10  
wherein said equalizing and decision means comprises  
matrix multiplication means for multiplying by a first  
diagonal matrix having elements dependent on channel  
coefficients and by a second matrix which is a subset of  
10 a Walsh Hadamard matrix.
12. A receiver as claimed in any of claims 7 to 11  
wherein said equalizing and decision means comprises  
means for performing minimum mean square error  
15 equalization.

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